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Fifty new poems for children

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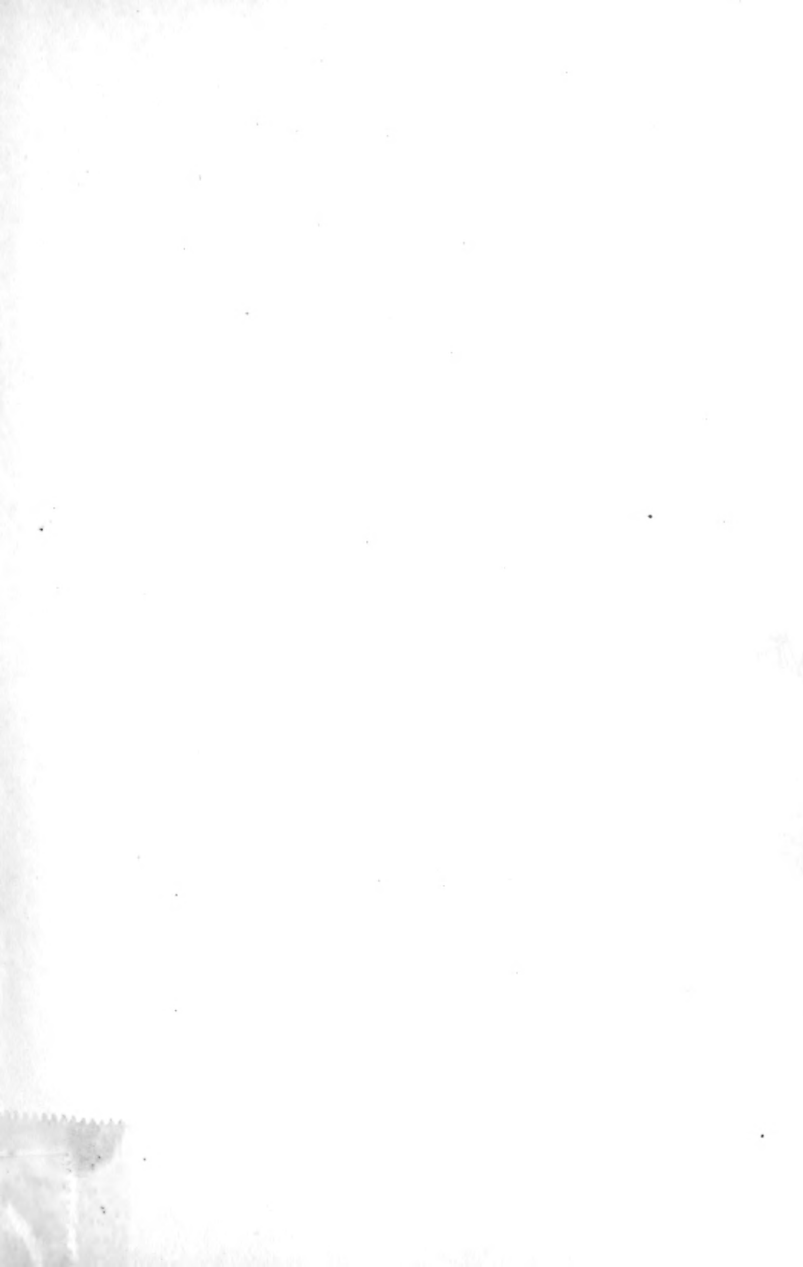
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THE CENTRAL CHILDREN'S ROOM
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FIFTY NEW POEMS FOR CHILDREN

AN ANTHOLOGY SELECTED
FROM BOOKS RECENTLY
PUBLISHED BY
BASIL BLACKWELL
OXFORD

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THE BUTTERFLIES' SONG.

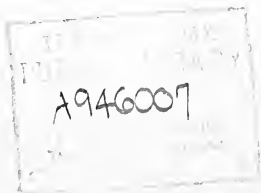
*Oh ! the butterflies in the moonshine !
And the daisies in the moonshine !
And the red lights in the darkness !*

*Sung at the piano by a child aged
three years and six months.*

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

The thanks of the publishers are due to the authors represented in this book for permission courteously given to reprint ; and to Mr. C. T. Nightingale for the use of the woodcut reproduced on the cover.

An alphabetical list of authors, together with the names of the books from which selection has been made, will be found on pages 62 and 63.



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THE APPLE RHYME.

IN my garden grows a tree
Of apple-blossom, where for me
A blackbird perches every day,
Sings his song and flies away.

So since fairies make for birds
Music out of fairy words,
I have learned from it a rhyme
For folk to sing at apple-time,
Which, (if you live where apples grow),
You'll find a useful thing to know.

THE RHYME (to be sung very slowly under an apple-tree in August or September).

Apples ripe and apples red,
Grow they high above my head.
Alack-a-day! for I am small
And apple-trees are mostly tall;
Dreary-me! But what is sadder,
Nobody can find a ladder.
Call a pixy, green or brown,
And bid him throw the apples down.
Pixy, throw them down as quick
Or quicker than my hands could pick!
One, two, three and now another,
Each one bigger than the other.
Pixies green and pixies brown,
Throw the big red apples down.

M. NIGHTINGALE.

THE RABBIT.




BROWN bunny sits inside his burrow
Till everything is still,
Then out he slips along the furrow,
Or up the grassy hill.

He nibbles all about the bushes
Or sits to wash his face,
But at a sound he stamps, and rushes
At a surprising pace.

You see some little streaks and flashes,
A last sharp twink of white,
As down his hidy-hole he dashes
And disappears from sight.

EDITH KING.

HENRY AND MARY.

ENRY was a worthy king,
Mary was his queen,
He gave to her a snowdrop
Upon a stalk of green.

Then all for his kindness
And all for his care
She gave him a new-laid egg
In the garden there.

Love, can you sing?
I cannot sing.

Or story-tell?
Not one I know.

Then let us play at queen and king,
As down the garden walks we go.

ROBERT GRAVES.

THE MUMMERS.

HERE'S greeting for the master,
And for the mistress greeting,
And greeting for each gallant lad
And every pretty sweeting,
And greeting for the little children
Dancing round our meeting.

We be your servants all,
We be merry mummers;
We know jolly winter's face
Though we ne'er saw summer's;
We come in wi' the end o' the year,
For we be Christmas-comers.

This here do be Saint George,
This the heathen Paynim,
Dragon he will drink your healths
When Saint George has slain him,
This do be a beautiful maid
And a trouble 'twere to train him!

There's our mumming ended
And nothing to distress ye—
Surely, we be little loth
Since so kindly press ye.
Here's God bless ye, master, mistress,
All the house, God bless ye!

ELEANOR FARJEON.

ROCK-A-BYE.



ROCK! Rock! the night wind is swaying
The birds in the branches on high.
Head under wing dreaming they sing
Swung o'er a wonderful sky.
They dream of roses that never were born,
Roses that never can die.

Sleep! Sleep! Sleep!—little nestling:
Mother broods close on the nest.
No night-bird of prey shall snatch thee away,
No terror break into thy rest.
Sleep till the stars, the roses of night,
Close their last buds in the west.

WILLOUGHBY WEAVING.

TO THE BAT.

LITTLE bat, little bat,
Pray, when you speak,
Speak a bit louder,
You've such a high squeak,
That only those people
With quite a good ear,
Who know all about you,
Can possibly hear.

EDITH KING.

THE WIND.

WHY does the wind so want to be
Here in my little room with me?
He's all the world to blow about,
But just because I keep him out
He cannot be a moment still,
But frets upon my window sill,
And sometimes brings a noisy rain
To help him batter at the pane.

Upon my door he comes to knock.
He rattles, rattles at the lock
And lifts the latch and stirs the key—
Then waits a moment breathlessly,
And soon, more fiercely than before,
He shakes my little trembling door,
And though "Come in, come in!" I say,
He neither comes nor goes away.

Barefoot across the chilly floor
I run and open wide the door;
He rushes in and back again
He goes to batter door and pane,
Pleased to have blown my candle out.
He's all the world to blow about,
Why does he want so much to be
Here in my little room with me?

E. RENDALL.

THE SCISSOR-MAN.



ING a song of Scissor-men,
"Mend a broken plate,
Bring your knives and garden shears,
I'll do them while you wait.
Buzz-a-wuzz! Buzz-a-wuzz!
Fast the wheel or slow,
Ticker Tacker! Ticker Tack!
Rivets in a row."

Sing a song of Scissor-men,
Sitting in the sun,
Sing it when the day begins,
Sing it when it's done.
Be it hard or be it soft,
Here's a jolly plan;
Sing to make the work go well,
Like the Scissor-man.

M. NIGHTINGALE.

OF A CERTAIN GREEN-EYED MONSTER.



HARLES gave Elizabeth a Dodo,
Charles never offered one to me—
The loveliest lemon-coloured Dodo,
With the greenest eyes that you could wish
to see.

Now it isn't that I'm doubting if Charles loves me,
And I know that he would ask me out to tea,
But he *did* give Elizabeth a Dodo,
And he never even offered one to me.

E. L. DUFF.

BY THE CRIB.



HE small child-angels
New 'scaped from Heaven,
Like a flight of rose-leaves
On snow new driven.

They came hurrying, winging
To the stable-stall,
Like a bush of roses
On a June wall.

They perched by the manger
In rafter and roof,
For their wings the stable
Was weather proof.

There were kings and shepherds
And the sheep-dog came,
The ass and oxen
And a new-born lamb.

Lions and tigers
Knelt in the door,
Their wrath forgotten
And their warfare o'er.

The wren and robin
Came hopping in;
And the snake came wriggling
With his spotted skin.

Here all Creation
To the Feast bid
Came loving and weeping
And saw unchild.

The small child-angels
Like golden bees
Were winging and singing
A song of Peace.

And all Creation
Sang with the stars,
That the Peace was signèd
And an end of wars.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

NEW SIGHTS.




LIKE to see a thing I know
Has not been seen before,
That's why I cut my apple through
To look into the core.

It's nice to think though many an eye
Has seen the ruddy skin,
Mine is the very first to spy
The five brown pips within.

EDITH KING.

THE CARAVAN.

F I could be a gipsy-boy and have a caravan
I'd travel all the world, I would, before I was
a man;
We'd drive beyond the far blue hills—us two,
my horse and me—
And on and on and on and on until we reached the sea.

And there I'd wash his legs quite clean and bid him
come inside,
Whilst I would stand upon the roof and scan the flow-
ing tide,
And he and I would sail away and scour the Spanish
main,
And when we'd swept the Spaniards out we'd p'r'aps
sail home again.

Or if my horse was very tired of ships and being good,
And wanted most to stretch his legs (as many horses
would)
We'd call a whale to tow us to a desert island beach,
And there we'd search for coconuts and have a whole
one each.

If I could be a gipsy boy I wouldn't bring a load
Of pots and pans and chairs and things and sell them
in the road.
Oh, if I was a gipsy boy and had a caravan
I'd see the whole wide world, I would, before I was a
man.

M. NIGHTINGALE.

LITTLE APRIL FISH.



ON April Day, on April Day,
There came to me from far away
A letter and a fish,
And somebody—I don't know who—
Wrote in the letter what to do,
And said if I would wish a wish
(And never lose my little fish)
Some evening when the moon was blue
It would come true.

On April Day, on April Day,
All by myself I hid away
My letter and my fish.
I was so secret, no one knew
The funny things I had to do,
Nor what I wished for in my wish.
I haven't lost my little fish,
So if to-night the moon is blue
It will come true.

E. RENDALL.

THE KING OF CHINA'S DAUGHTER.



HE King of China's daughter,
She never would love me
Though I hung my cap and bells upon
Her nutmeg tree.

For oranges and lemons,
The stars in bright blue air,
(I stole them long ago, my dear)
Were dangling there.
The Moon did give me silver pence,
The Sun did give me gold,
And both together softly blew
And made my porridge cold;
But the King of China's daughter
Pretended not to see
When I hung my cap and bells upon
Her nutmeg tree.

The King of China's daughter
So beautiful to see
With her face like yellow water, left
Her nutmeg tree.
Her little rope for skipping
She kissed and gave it me—
Made of painted notes of singing-birds
Among the fields of tea.
I skipped across the nutmeg grove,—
I skipped across the sea;
But neither sun nor moon, my dear,
Has yet caught me.

EDITH SITWELL.

THE MOLE.



HE burrowing mole lives under the ground
Day in and day out, all the changing year
round;
Like a train in a tunnel, in darkness he goes,
And makes his own track with his feet and his nose.

He lives upon worms as content as can be
For breakfast and supper, for dinner and tea,
Yes, just as they are, as a matter of course,
He gobbles them up, without cooking or sauce.

If you lived where he does, in a very short time
I fear you'd be covered completely with grime;
But though he works hard all day long for his meat
And has but one coat, he is perfectly neat.


It's not very often he visits the light,
Except when he's angry and anxious to fight;
Then he and his enemy leave their dark holes,
And in warfare there's nothing more savage than
moles.

Their virtues are great, but their tempers are bad,
Biting and scratching, they scuffle like mad,
And over and over they roll in the ditch,
Until it's a puzzle to see which is which.

But if they discover you watching the fray,
They leave off at once to get out of the way,
And burrow so quickly, scarce making a sound,
That before you count ten they're gone into the
ground.

EDITH KING.

CRADLE-SONG FOR CHRISTMAS.

HILD, when on this night you lie
Softly, undisturbedly,
On as white a bed of down
As any child's in London Town,
By a fire that all the night
Keeps your chamber warm and light :
Dream, if dreams are yet your law,
Your bed of down a bed of straw,
Only warmed and lighted by
One star in the open sky.
Sweet you'll sleep then, for we know
Once a child slept sweetly so.

ELEANOR FARJEON.

DOUBLE RED DAISIES.



DOUBLE red daisies, they're my flowers
Which nobody else may grow
In a big quarrelsome house like ours
They try it sometimes, but no,
I root them up because they're my flowers
Which nobody else may grow.


*Claire has a tea-rose, but she didn't plant it ;
'Ben has an iris, but I don't want it.
'Daisies, double red daisies for me,
The beautifullest flowers in the garden.*

Double red daisy, that's my mark :
I paint it in all my books.
It's carved high up on the beech-tree bark—
How neat and lovely it looks!
So don't forget that it's my trademark ;
Don't copy it in your books.

*Claire has a tea-rose, but she didn't plant it ;
'Ben has an iris, but I don't want it.
Daisies, double red daisies for me,
The beautifullest flowers in the garden.*

ROBERT GRAVES.

RING-A-RING O' FAIRIES.

ING-A-RING o' fairies,
Pixies, sprites and elves,
Dancing with a little boy
As nimble as themselves.

Charm a sleepy song-thrush
To sing a fairy tune;
Was ever such a pretty dance
Seen beneath the moon?

M. NIGHTINGALE.

PEBBLES.



PEBBLES, pebbles, pebbles,
For miles and miles and miles ;
A sloping bank of pebbles
Round all the British Isles.

Grinding, grinding, grinding,
Where the heavy billows pound,
Till they are smooth as marbles,
And often just as round.

White ones, grey ones, brown ones,
Lime and slate and quartz ;
Yellow ones and pink ones,
Pebbles of all sorts.

Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
How strange it is to think
That after all these ages
In my tin pail they clink.

Jewels, jewels, jewels,
For every child like me,
Oh, how I love the pebbles,
Beside the sounding sea !

EDITH KING.

GOBLIN FEET.



AM off down the road
Where the fairy lanterns glowed
And the little pretty flitter-mice are flying :
A slender band of grey
It runs creepily away
And the hedges and the grasses are a-sighing.
The air is full of wings,
And of blundering beetle-things
That warn you with their whirring and their humming.
O! I hear the tiny horns
Of enchanted leprechauns
And the padding feet of many gnomes a-coming!

O! the lights: O! the gleams: O! the little tinkly
sounds:
O! the rustle of their noiseless little robes:
O! the echo of their feet—of their little happy feet:
O! their swinging lamps in little starlit globes.

I must follow in their train
Down the crooked fairy lane
Where the coney-rabbits long ago have gone,
And where silverly they sing
In a moving moonlit ring
All a-twinkle with the jewels they have on.
They are fading round the turn
Where the glow-worms palely burn
And the echo of their padding feet is dying!

O! it's knocking at my heart—
Let me go! O! let me start!
For the little magic hours are all a-flying.

O! the warmth! O! the hum! O! the colours in the
dark!

O! the gauzy wings of golden honey-flies!
O! the music of their feet—of their dancing goblin feet!
O! the magic! O! the sorrow when it dies.

J. R. R. TOLKEIN.

ROMANCE.



ROUND the next corner and in the next street
Adventure lies in wait for you.
Oh, who can tell what you may meet
Round the next corner and in the next street!
Could life be anything but sweet
When all is hazardous and new
Round the next corner and in the next street?
Adventure lies in wait for you.

E. F. A GEACH.

ACORNS.



H, when the ripe acorns,
So smooth and so brown,
Get loose from their cups
And come pattering down,

What work is in store
For the girls and the boys,
First of all to collect them,
And then to make toys.

For they can make thimbles,
And tiny dolls' cradles,
And thorn-handled saucepans,
And egg-cups and ladles,

Extinguishers, flower-pots,
Baskets and rings,
And barrels and buckets,
And all kinds of things.

They can stock a whole shop,
If they have any brains,
And use a small penknife,
And plenty of pains.

EDITH KING.

A NEW DAY.



LITTLE one, my little one,
Look and laugh, the day is new!
Joyfully the round-faced sun
Smiles at me and you.

See, he shines above the brim
Of the clouds that gave us rain.
Kiss your little hand to him,
Through the nursery pane.

LILY DOUGALL.

THE MUFFIN-MAN.

WHEN the nursery corners are creepy dim,
And it isn't quite time for tea,
And the shadows and things are very grim,
And there's nobody there but me,
I wait in the window to hear his feet
Come clackety, clackety down the street,
And I love the sound of his ding-dong bell
And his "Muffins, O, Muffins, O, Muffins to sell."

He always comes in the wind or wet
Or the fog or the bitterest cold,
He's my greatest friend, though we haven't met
And he's ever so big and old.
For the dark is a little bit lonely sad
When you've no one else and you wish you had,
And I think he knows, for he rings his bell
And shouts to me "Muffins, O, Muffins to sell."

M. NIGHTINGALE.

TRAMS.




CASTLES of crystal,
Castles of wood,
Moving on pulleys
Just as you should!

See the gay people
Flaunting like flags,
Bells in the steeple,
Sky all in rags.
Bright as a parrot
Flaunts the gay heat—
Songs in the garret,
Fruit in the street;
Plump as a cherry,
Red as a rose,
Old Mother Berry—
Blowing her nose!

EDITH SITWELL.

USEFUL THINGS.

 'D like so very much to have
Some of the useful things
That lucky birds and beasts have got,
And first of all their wings ;

For then into the apple-tree
I should not need to climb,
And graze my legs and tear my frock,
In getting down each time.

Then when the flies are troublesome
I'd like to have a tail,
And when I'm battling with the wasps
The beetle's coat of mail.

When I am bathing in the sea
And find it hard to float,
I'd like to borrow from the duck
Her webs and oily coat.

For thus provided I could live
On land, in air, or sea,
And fly and flap, and fight and float,
Just as it suited me.

EDITH KING.

THE FOWLS.

BLACK hens, white hens, speckled hens and brown.
Clucking in the sunshine, strutting up and down ;

Very vain and happy they for were the truth but known
Each thinks the loudest cackle in the farm-yard is her own,

And each declares the egg she's left behind her in the nest

Is bigger and much better than the eggs of all the rest.

"Cackle-cackle! Cluck-a-cluck!

Cock-a-doodle-do!

The cock is king of Farm-yard Land,

But I am queen there, too."

White hens, brown hens, speckled hens and black,
With lots of little yellow chicks a-toddling at their back ;
Father cock must come and look, his red comb on his head ;

"Cheep at him, my pretties! Sir, be careful how you tread!

Now are they not a lovely brood? Just see them peck and run ;

And see how my two soft warm wings will cover every one.

Cackle-cackle! Cheepie-cheep!

Ah, Cock-a-doodle-do,

Although you're king of Farm-yard Land

I'm prouder far than you!"

M. NIGHTINGALE.

WHAT SHALL WE DRESS OUR BABY IN?

WINTER and Summer must soon begin,
What shall we dress our baby in?
What shall we dress her in, darling, say,
That will do for work and will do for play,
For Sundays and Mondays and every day.
What shall we dress her in, darling, say?

Winter and Summer must soon begin,
What shall we dress our baby in?
Softest silk for her tender skin,
Whitest linen all smooth and thin,
And a little striped jacket to button her in.

E. RENDALL.

THE SWALLOW.



SWALLOW, dear swallow, I wonder, I wonder
Why you of all the birds build the eaves
under.

Farther than any you wander and roam,
Closer than any you cling to your home.

You, whom we never see touch earth at all,
Out of the mud you have built your nest wall;
Sometimes you dimple the pond as you fly,
Sometimes you're lost in the blue of the sky.

EDITH KING.

CHILD'S CAROL.



WHEN there dawns a certain Star
Comes a Stranger into the city ;
The feet of prayer his dear feet are,
His hands they are the hands of pity.

Every houseplace rich and poor
Shall show for welcome a sprig of green,
And every heart shall open its door
To let the Stranger enter in.

I will set my door ajar
That he may enter if he please ;
The eyes of love his dear eyes are,
His brow it is the brow of peace.

Through the heart of every child
And man and woman in the city
He shall pass, and they be filled
With love and peace and prayer and pity.

ELEANOR FARJEON.

THE STRANGE SERVANT.



ALL she is, and straight and slender,
With soft hair beneath a cap
Pent and pinned; within her lap
Weep her lily hands, for work too tender.

She's a fairy, through transgression
Doomed to doff her webby smock,
Doomed to rise at six o'clock,
Doomed to bear a mistress's repression.

Once she romped in fairy revels
Down the dim moon-dappled glades,
Rode on thrilling honey-raids,
Danced the glow-lamps out on lawny levels.

Ere her trouble she was tiny;
'Tis her doom to be so tall;
Thus her hair no more will fall
To her feet, all shimmering and sunshiny.

O her eyes, like pools at twilight,
Mournful, whence pale radiance peers!
O her voice, that throbs with tears
In the attic 'neath the staring skylight!

Daylong does she household labour,
Lights the fires and scrubs the floors,
Washes up and answers doors,
Ushers in the dread, stout, stuffy neighbour.

Then at night she seeks her attic,
Parts her clothes with those pale hands,
Slips at last her shift, and stands
Moon-caressed, most yearningly ecstatic—

Arms out, pleads her condonation . . .
Hapless one ! she gains no grace ;
They whom fairy laws abase
Serve the utter term of tribulation.

Yet (though far her happy wood is)
Oft her folk fly in at night,
Pour sweet pity on her plight,
Comfort her with gossipry and goodies.

WILFRID BLAIR.

A GRACE.

FOR fish,
In dish;
For groat,
In boat;
For browny meat
From Market Street;
For milk from cow—
I've finished now . . .
My thanks wilt take
For Jesus' sake?

E. L. DUFF.

THE DUCK.



If I were in a fairy tale,
And it were my good luck
To have a wish, I'd choose to be
A lovely snow-white duck.

When she puts off into the pond
And leaves me on the brink,
She wags her stumpy tail at me,
And gives a saucy wink,

Which says as plain as words could say
I'm safe as safe can be,
Stay there, or you will drown yourself,
The pond was made for me.

She goes a-sailing to and fro,
Just like a fishing-boat,
And steers and paddles all herself,
And never wets her coat.

Then in the water, upside down,
I've often seen her stand,
More neatly than the little boys
Who do it on the land.

And, best of all, her children are
The ducklings, bright as gold,
Who swim about the pond with her
And do as they are told.

EDITH KING.

SPECULATION.



FATHER very often wonders
When it lightens why it thunders,
And he wonders, when it brightens,
When it thunders why it lightens.

GUY BOAS.

THE HEDGEHOG.



HE hedgehog is a little beast
Who likes a quiet wood,
Where he can feed his family
On proper hedgehog food.

He has a funny little snout
That's rather like a pig's,
With which he smells, like us, of course,
But also runts and digs.

He wears the queerest prickly coat,
Instead of hair or fur,
And only has to curl himself
To bristle like a burr.

He does not need to battle with
Or run away from foes,
His coat does all the work for him,
It pricks them on the nose.

EDITH KING.

ON CHRISTMAS DAY.



CENTED woods and gold,
Costly stuffs and vair,
On Christmas Day
Were offered there.

But they

Who tendered royal gifts were kings, and very old,
And you, my little son,
Are not yet one.

Love Him very well,
Tenderly and true,
On Christmas Day,
And you shall do
Sufficiently as they
Who offered scented wood and plates of gold
To Mary's little Son,
Not one year old.

E. L. DUFF.

THE CLOUD HOUSE.



LITTLE old man lived up in a cloud,
And he was as poor as he was proud.

When the sun came out, and the day was
bright,
His dear little house was all shining white.

When evening came, and the sun went to bed,
His dear little house turned a lovely red.

When the stars came out, and they winked at him,
His dear little house was all grey and dim.

When the moon came out, shining soft and clear,
His dear little house looked ever so dear!

.

But the sun was so hot one very fine day
That the cloud and the little man melted away!
And where they melted to—no one can say!

ADRIAN MOTT.



I'm sure that it's one of the very best things
To wake in the morning as merry as kings,
And to know that a whole day has just been
begun,
And there's hours and hours before it is done.

There's really so many things lovely to do,
That you're sure to be happy the longest day through;
And the very next best thing, I'm sure you'll agree,
Is to go off to bed when you're tired as can be.

M. NIGHTINGALE.

LITTLE AMERICAN MAISIE.



LITTLE American Maisie
Is as funny as funny can be,
She calls a tomato "tomayto,"
And says that a Z is a "Zee"!

But little American Maisie
Thinks it's me that is funny instead,
'Cause I call a tomayto "tomato,"
And pretend that a Zee is a Zed!

E. RENDALL.

ON THE SNOW.



I KNEW no woman, child, or man
Had been before my steps to-day.
By Dippel Woods the snow-lanes ran
Soft and uncrushed above their clay;
But little starry feet had traced
Their passages as though in words,
And all those lanes of snow were laced
With runnings of departed birds.

ELEANOR FARJEON.

THE BEETLE.



HE other day, to my surprise,
I saw a beetle blue
Spread slowly out, and fly away—
I never thought he flew.

I see, he wears an overall
To shield his gauzy wings,
As I put on a pinafore
To save my Sunday things.

EDITH KING.

UNDERNEATH THE CLOTHES.



'M sure that no-one ever knows
The fun I have beneath the clo'es.
I snuggle down inside the bed,
And cover all my face and head.

I'ts p'raps a coal-mine, p'raps a cave,
And sometimes, when I'm very brave,
It's Daniel's den with three or four
Or even six real lions that roar.

It's most exciting how it goes,
The road that leads beneath the clo'es;
You never can tell how it ends,
Because, you see, it all depends.

M. NIGHTINGALE.

DANDELION DOWN.



HE silken dandelion down
Sails off like a balloon,
I wish that I could mount on it
This breezy afternoon.

For it will glide o'er hedge and brook
Where I can never stray,
And then will anchor soft as dreams
In meadows far away.

EDITH KING.

POEMS BY CHILDREN.

(The following poems by E. Wyndham Tennant, were written between the ages of four and nine).

"Everything belongs to something else, if you think about it."



THE towel and the bath,
And the bath and the soap,
And the soap was the fat,
And the fat was the pig,
And the pig was the bran,
And the bran makes sausages ;
And man eats the sausages
And God gets man.

E. W. TENNANT.

POEMS BY CHILDREN.

FIRELAND.



WHEN you look into the fire
You see strange faces in galore,
You see the fairies dance and scuttle,
At play, or else at war.

Then you see the King's own castle
In the midst of gardens grand,
With his troop of Lords and Ladies,
The finest in the land.

The pebbles are of amber,
So lovely and so yellow,
The flowers are of red and gold,
So fiery and so mellow.

The army of the Fire King
Is very, very fine,
And were it not of red-hot coal
I wish that it were mine.

The navy of his Majesty
That sails on seas of flame,
The biggest ship's a faggot,
And "Coler" is her name.

And when the fire it burneth low,
The king in fever lies;
And when the fire it goeth out,
The whole of Fireland dies.

E. W. TENNANT.

POEMS BY CHILDREN.

THE BALLAD OF MACDONALD AND
MACDUFF.



MACDONALD took his dirk,
He vowed he'd rid the Clan,
Of his enemy MacDuff,
That hard and cruel man.

Chorus: *Do you hear that, you rascally Turk?
Remember MacDonald has got his dirk.*

MacDonald took his men
And led them to the fray,
And many a life was lost
Upon that Summer's day.

Chorus: *Do you hear that, you rascally Turk?
Remember MacDonald has got his dirk.*

At last through the foes
MacDonald he got,
And fought with MacDuff
Upon the spot.

Chorus: *Do you hear that, you rascally Turk?
Remember MacDonald has got his dirk.*

POEMS BY CHILDREN.

MacDonald he thrust
In his claymore,
And he drew it out
Covered with gore.

Chorus: *Do you hear that, you rascally Turk?
Remember MacDonald has got his dirk.*

Proudly MacDonald
Walked away,
And there were rejoicings
Upon that day.


Chorus: *Do you hear that, you rascally Turk?
Remember MacDonald has got his dirk.*

E. W. TENNANT.

POEMS BY CHILDREN.

THE NIGHT ATTACK.

A Poem of Bravery.

S we sat round the camp fire
Oh what is it we see?
The foe have made a night attack
And shall we fight or flee?

But no! we will not flee
Though troops we sorely lack,
For it is not a soldier's deed
To start and then turn back.

Just as our cowardly foe
Were going to make a charge,
Our friends came to our rescue
And now our force is large.

We beat! we beat! we routed them;
Our loss was very small;
And as we came back to the camp
They cheered us, one and all.

E. W. TENNANT.

THE PLAY OF ROBERT THE BRUCE.



ROBERT The Bruce in his room did stand,
His sword was in his swarthy hand.

“What is that mine eyes do see?
Comyn the Red, I think it be!”

And there a-standing by the bed,
There stood the ghost of Comyn the Red!

“Ah, traitor, I thought that thou wert dead!”

The Ghost speaks.

“Although thou saw’st me laid in my grave,
I’ve now come back to thee, scurvy knave.
And though you thought that I were dead,
I’ll wreak my vengeance on your head!”

CURTAIN.

E. W. TENNANT.

POEMS BY CHILDREN.

(The following poems by Vivienne Dayrell, were written between the ages of nine and fifteen).

IN THE BUNNIES' WOOD.



HERE the young leaves sway in the wind,
And the little shy ferns uncurl to the kiss of
the sun,
Where the wood is dark and cool,
With the wild flowers by the pool
There let me lie . . .
The soft breeze passes by . . .
I am one with the wild blue sky
And the grass where the rabbits run.

VIVIENNE DAYRELL.

POEMS BY CHILDREN.

APRIL.



YOU'RE singing softly, sweet and low,
Cool Spring Wind,
Bringing daffodils—do not go,
Little Spring Wind.

Don't come yet, Summer; with strong-scented flowers,
Stay breezy days, and April showers:
For me—out on the downs are happier hours
With April and the cool Spring Wind.

Oh—pleasure you give and pleasure you take,
Cool Spring Wind,
In telling the baby buds to awake,
Laughing Spring Wind,
Awakening songs to them you sing,
Ah, the happy message of Spring!
“Unfold—unfold, you tiny thing,”
Hark to the cool Spring Wind!

You bend you down to warm Mother Earth,
Cool Spring Wind,
Whisper “Flowers—flowers, 'tis time for your birth,”
Gay Spring Wind.
“Kingcups, crocuses, daffodils, too,
Come up—come out of the brown earth, *do!*
For everything is waiting for you,”
Says the cool Spring Wind.

VIVIENNE DAYRELL.

POEMS BY CHILDREN.

LATE MAY.



HE dusky trees, no longer dumb,
Are asking when the Spring will come.
The twilight wind's unscented yet
By phlox or brier or mignonette.
A lonely robin on the wing
Is calling plaintively for Spring.

VIVIENNE DAYRELL.

POEMS BY CHILDREN.

THE MAGIC WALL-PAPER.



ONE night when I was very small
I couldn't go to sleep at all,
As to the wall I turned my face
There, on the paper, I could trace
Bright-coloured flowers, gay reds and blues,
And perched upon them—cockatoos.
With open claw and smiling beak,
These painted birds began to speak:—
“We sit upon these painted flowers
For sixteen weary, silent hours.
At nine o'clock we fly away
To South Sea Islands, where we play
That we're real parrots . . . squawk and shout
And drop our feathers all about—
(And little South Sea Island boys
Pick them up and use for toys;
But little coffee-coloured girls
Stick them in their sable curls!)
Where the blue sea's always calm
There we fly from palm to palm,
Up and down the shining beaches
Caves re-echo to our screeches!”

VIVIENNE DAYRELL.

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